CLOSING STOCK PRICES

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WEATHER
Tonight: Windy, 20
Tomorrow: Partly sunny, 30s.
SUNSET: 5:38 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW: 6:12 AM

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FINAL
WALL ST. CLOSING P. 64-71
LATE SPORTS

RAY AND KING —IS IT OVER?

Memphis Says Yes

By LEONARD KATZ
New York Post Correspondent

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—James Earl Ray began the first day of his 99-year sentence in prison today—in a maximum security cell— secure in the knowledge that only he has all the answers.

Even though he has pleaded guilty and been sentenced for the murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he sticks tenaciously to his story that he was a tool in the hands of conspirators. But none except Ray can be certain of the truth.

Ray was driven the 200 miles from his Memphis jail cell to Tennessee State Prison in Nashville in an armed eight-car caravan. Barring a change in plans, he will spend his entire term there. There was confusion over whether he ever would be eligible for parole.

Judge W. Preston Battle, who sentenced Ray, ex-

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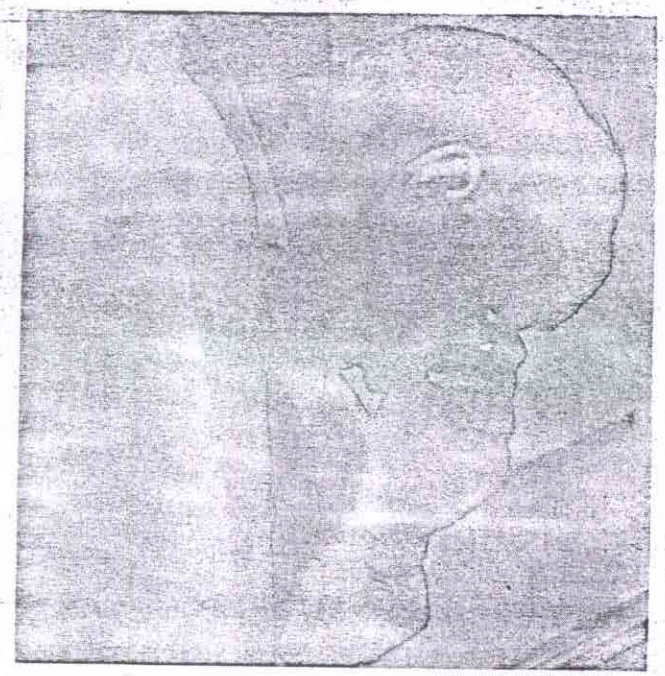

Associated Press Wirephoto by Fred Jewell

James Earl Ray entering the Tennessee State Penitentiary in Nashville today.

Widow Says No

By PETER HANN

Amid mounting protests over the sudden wrap-up of the James Earl Ray case, the Justice Dept. said today that it was continuing its investigation of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to determine whether a conspiracy was involved.

But a Justice official said the department had found no evidence of a conspiracy in the nearly 11 months it has worked on the case.

Coretta King, widow of the slain rights leader, the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, King's successor as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and NAACP leader Roy Wilkins indicated that they believe a conspiracy was behind the murder despite the Memphis conviction of Ray as a killer who acted alone.

The court allowed Ray to plead guilty to the murder in exchange for a 99-year

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Mrs. King: Probe Must Go On

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prison sentence, sparing his life.

Mrs. King said the plea "cannot be allowed to close the case and end the search for the many fingers which helped pull the trigger."

She said: "All concerned people must press the state of Tennessee and the U. S. government to continue until all who are responsible for this crime have been apprehended."

Wilkins said the Memphis court action "means only that the trigger-man in this monstrous crime has been convicted."

He added that "in a rhetorical sense the nation which permitted virulent opposition to the aspirations of Dr. King and his people is the real culprit."

Abernathy pledged the vigilance of SCLC "until justice is meted out to all of the perpetrators."

One Justice Dept. source was quoted as saying:

"We never gave up looking for a conspiracy, but we did not find any evidence."

A conspiracy had been charged in the first warrant issued for the arrest of Eric Starvo Galt, a Ray alias two weeks after the assassination. At other times federal officials acknowledged that some circumstances of the case indicated a conspiracy.

But the possibility remains official now only in terms of a statement yesterday by a Justice Dept. spokesman who said: "The investigation into the conspiracy allegation is still open."

Ray's remarks at yesterday's 2½-hour trial bolstered the views of those who believe the theory of a conspiracy, despite the agreement of prosecution and defense attorneys that there was none.

Ray said he did not "exactly accept the theories" of former Attorney General Clark and FBI Director Hoover that there were no other persons involved in the slaying.

Mrs. King said she and her family shared "a sense of emotional relief" that Ray had been sentenced.

"For the moment we have been spared a trial which would compel us to relive the fearful tragic events of [Dr. King's] death," she said.

"But," she added, "we realize that this is but a respite." Only when others involved in the crime were caught, she said, "can the conscience of the nation rest."

Both Mrs. King and Abernathy said they would not have been in favor of a death sentence for Ray, which might have closed the conspiracy issue.

The Rev. James Orange, a SCLC official who was with Dr. King when he was slain last April 4, said he would have freed Ray.

"I am trying to stay out of this," he said. But he added—without elaborating—"I think they should set this man free."

The case for a conspiracy was bolstered by several factors which remained unexplained.

First, Ray appeared to have no motive for the shooting. He came of a poor background but appeared to have no particular racial or other hatreds.

Second, his criminal record was at odds with the masterly conduct of the King assassination. In a string of previous crimes, mostly petty, he was unsuccessful and inept.

Yet he obtained a false Canadian passport, crossed the border, flew to Portugal and London and was about to leave for Brussels before he was finally caught.

Third, how and where did he get the money for these journeys?

Fourth, how did he contrive to send a false message to the police immediately after the killing which sent them to the opposite side of Memphis while he got away?

Memphis: Ray Case Is Over

Continued from Page 1

plained that there is a Tennessee law which makes a prisoner eligible for parole "at any time after 30 years" behind bars, no matter how long his original term is.

But "as a practical matter," the judge said, no parole is likely for Ray until he has served "at least 50 years." That would be in the year 2019, when he is 91 years old. If he had received a life sentence, Ray would have been up for parole in 1981.

His attorney, the prosecutor, the FBI and the writer to whom he told his story believe the plan for killing King was conceived and executed by Ray alone. But they are not certain.

His attorney, Percy Foreman, says Ray's clinging to the conspiracy story is wrapped up in his subconscious.

"He thinks if he says it was a conspiracy he's not guilty," Foreman said.

Author William Bradford Huie, who like Foreman thought at first there was a conspiracy, said:

"I have been unable to come up with one shred of evidence that anyone else but Ray is involved in the murder of Dr. King."

Shelby County Attorney General Phil Canale, the man who prosecuted Ray, was another who believed in the conspiracy theory at first. He no longer does.

"After an exhaustive investigation by the FBI and my staff the inescapable conclusion is that Ray did it himself," he said.

If Ray wasn't a hired killer what then was the motive for the murder?

Canale's Theory

Canale has indicated that he thinks it was a racial murder—that Ray is a racist who killed King because he was a black man causing trouble.

Huie, who has spent a year chasing down everything Ray has told him, thinks not. He says Ray hated Negroes but he doesn't believe he would kill to satisfy this hate.

"I don't really know why he killed Dr. King," Huie said. "There are many unanswered questions. One of the reasons was certainly to be a big shot, to be important. He is boastful about doing all this. That is why there was all this detail in everything he wrote to me.

"He takes self-satisfaction in the way he pulled it off. Trying to explain why he does things is a waste of time. There is no rational explanation for Ray to focus his hate on Dr. King and kill him.

"When he is asked directly about his feelings or motivation toward Dr. King he withdraws and simply says: 'I don't want to go into that.'"

Unreal Attitude

Huie said that a real insight into the motivation of Ray is his completely unreal attitude towards himself. After he escaped from prison in Missouri in 1966 he worked hard to cover his tracks. At the time he was a two-bit escaped convict with a $50 price on his head.

"I was being so careful because I thought the FBI would put me on the Top 10 any day," he told Huie.

"The FBI, of course, couldn't have cared less about Ray at the time," Huie said. "What it amounts to then is his yearning to be put on the Top 10—a yearning for recognition. It is in this yearning for recognition that you have to look into to find a motive for the murder of Dr. King."

Associated Press Wirephoto

Ray's cell

If Huie is on the right track then Ray is cut from the same bolt of cloth that produced a Lee Harvey Oswald and Sirhan Sirhan. He is a man whose ego is so out of proportion with his accomplishments that he kills to call attention to himself.

Ray's ego showed up in his relationship with those closest to him since he was captured.

"Hell, he thought he knew more law and was a better lawyer than me," Foreman said.

"He thought he could write better than I could," Huie says in explaining Ray. "He thought of himself as a writer and even registered as one at hotels when he was in Mexico."

Psychiatric reports on Ray shed little light on his motivations. According to Huie he had an IQ of 105, was coherent, alert and an anti-social type with anxiety and depressive features. Both psychiatrists found him "filled with self."

That Fatal Shot

But this seems hardly a sufficient imbalance for a small-time criminal to spend what little money he had to stalk and kill King. No one has yet explained what triggered Ray into firing that fatal shot in Memphis.

Ray has been exultant in his new-found status as the man who murdered King. He boasts about it openly and is viewed as something special by the other prisoners. Foreman tells of the only time he indicated any regret.

"He told me yesterday morning," Foreman said, "that he's where he is because of his own stupidity and had no one else to blame for that. I guess that could be interpreted as having regret of a sort."

Ray had told Foreman and Huie the actual firing of the 30:06 Remington rifle with a seven-power scope was done by a mysterious blond Cuban called Raoul. He met Raoul, he said, when he was in Canada and it was Raoul who made the contract for him to kill King.

Foreman thinks Raoul is Ray's invention.

"He and I know there is no Raoul. No one but Ray has ever seen Raoul. He's never been able to produce one person besides himself who's seen Raoul.

Huie on Raoul

Huie thinks there may really be a Raoul. He says there is a ring of truth to Ray's story about the man. But he also says:

"If there really is a Raoul he is probably someone who has no relationship whatsoever to the murder of Dr. King."

Ray told Huie and Foreman that just before King appeared on the balcony Raoul replaced him in the bathroom of the rooming house across the street from the Lorraine Hotel. He waited, he said, in his white Mustang with the motor running.

Then he heard a shot and Raoul rushed onto the street, dashed to the car and climbed into the back seat. He then lay down on the car floor and covered himself with a sheet as Ray drove away.

After he had driven about eight blocks, Ray says, Raoul got out of the car at a traffic light and disappeared.

The story that Ray got a lot of money for his part in the conspiracy is also fiction, according to Foreman and Huie. Foreman says that every dime Ray had and spent can be explained and Huie says the only money Ray had that can't be accounted for was the $2000 he spent for the Mustang. It was money, Huie agrees, that Ray could have gotten in a holdup he hasn't admitted to.

"There isn't any money to speak of that Ray ever had," Huie said. "The Mustang was the most expensive thing he ever owned in his life. He didn't have a cent for the lawyers. Every cent he paid his lawyers came from me."

Ray recently bagged to Foreman that "I'll get out [of jail] one way or another," but the prison authorities had no special awe for their new inmate.

He will be kept in maximum security for a month to six weeks—in an 8-by-10 cell—while his records are processed and authorities determine what kind of security he should have and where he should work.

After that, said Warden Lake Russell, "he'll be treated like everyone else."

Associated Press Wirephoto

James Earl Ray entering the pen today.